

# Narayan Sanyal

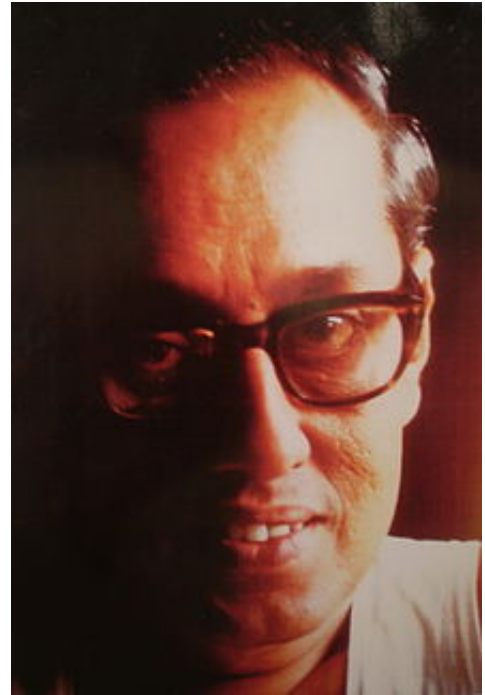
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**Narayan Sanyal** (Bengali: নারায়ণ সান্যাল; 26 April 1924 – 7 February 2005) was a well-known & versatile writer of modern Bengali literature as well as a civil engineer.<sup>[1]</sup>

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## Narayan Sanyal



Narayan Sanyal

<b>Born</b>	26 April 1924 <div>Calcutta, Bengal Province, British India</div>
<b>Died</b>	7 February 2005 (aged 80) <div>Kolkata, West Bengal, India</div>
<b>Parent(s)</b>	Chittasukh Sanyal and Basantalata Devi

## Biography

Narayan Sanyal was born in Calcutta to Chittasukh Sanyal and Basantalata Devi. His family consisted of wife Sabita Sanyal; elder daughter Anindita Basu, son-in-law Amitabha Basu, son Tirtharenu Sanyal, daughter-in-law Sharmila Sanyal, younger daughter Mou Sanyal Talukdar, son-in-law Soumitra Talukdar.

Although Sanyal is known mostly as a novelist, he was also an eminent civil engineer by profession. After graduating in science from the University of Calcutta, he passed Bachelor of Engineering from Bengal Engineering College in 1948. Thereafter he joined Public Works Department and later National Buildings Organisation, Ministry of Works and Housing, Eastern Region, Govt of India. He was a Fellow of the Institution of Engineers (India) and a Fellow of the Association of Engineers (India). He also wrote books in Civil Engineering such as *Vaastu Vigyan*.

A biography of Narayan Sanyal was written by Pradip Dutta – *Ami Narayan Sanyal Ke Dekhechi*.

A Documentary on Writer Narayan Sanyal was screened on the 18th Kolkata International Film Festival on 15th November 2012 at Bangla Academy . The film " CHOKHER DEKHA PRANER KOTHA .... Narayan Sanyal " in Bengali named by his elder son-in-law Amitabha basu, was directed by his younger son-in-law Soumitra talukdar and produced by his younger daughter Mou Sanyal .



Narayan Sanyal with his wife Sabita Sanyal

## Overview of his works

Sanyal wrote numerous books<sup>[2]</sup> that dealt with various topics, such as children, science, art and architecture, travels, psychiatry, technology, refugee problems, history, biographical pieces, encyclopaedia of animals, social novel and Devadasi-related.

Interestingly, this talented author also preferred writing books on deep shadow of many world famous works. One of the most popular Sci-Fictions *Nakshatraloker Debatatma* [নক্ষত্রলোকের দেবতাত্মা], is based on the transformation of human race from primitive creature to civilised intelligent species controlling the whole earth. Then it deals with Jupiter exploration and a super intelligent Computer *HAL*. The three parted book is an inspiration of 2001: A Space Odyssey by Arthur C. Clarke. In his book, Sanyal named HAL as *Jantra-Na*, in his mother tongue Bengali, it ambiguously means 'not a machine' as well as 'pain'.

His most popular work is *Biswasghatak* [বিশ্বাসঘাতক] written about the Manhattan project that developed the first US Atom Bomb. This book is based on the shadow of *Brighter than a Thousand Suns: A Personal History of the Atomic Scientists* (1970), by Austrian Robert Jungk.

Another book *Timi Timingil* is on Whales. This stands on an article published in Readers Digest.

He also wrote a series of detective fiction called the *Kanta*[কাঁটা] (Thorn) series. All of the stories were inspired from various foreign novels.

Apart from this series, he wrote *Bishupal Bodh: Uposonghar* [বিশুপাল বধ: উপসংহার], which is basically a completion of Sharadindu Bandyopadhyay's unfinished *Byomkesh Bakshi* story: *Bishupal Bodh*. NarayanBabu fulfilled some terms given by Bandyopadhyay's friend Pratul Chandra Gupta, who edited Bandyopadhyay's works. Samaresh Basu, as the editor (also a friend of Sanyal) of *Mahanagar*, a magazine, published it in a Puja issue.<sup>[3]</sup>

It must be clearly mentioned that Sanyal did not just copy, he took the central theme and then adopted in proper Bengali atmosphere, so that the reader can find it as their homely incidents. For this reason some changes in the original plot and a few anachronisms (that suit, e.g. offering a chair to the accused & the witness at the courtroom in India— which is not generally the practice) necessarily occur in his writings, and he was fully aware of that facts. Besides, he everywhere mentioned the source, the changes he made in his script and why these are necessary. He also tried to keep the nomenclature resembling the original ones so as to offer his gratitude. He often referred *P. K. Basu* to "the Perry Mason of the East", as he was inspired to create Basu from this masterpiece of Erle Stanley Gardner.

It is undoubtedly accepted by all that NarayanBabu was one of the finest authors in Bengali and he was a class apart from the flock of contemporary Bengali writers those who too dependent on sentiment and emotional overdose in their writings and too dependent on monopolist Bengali media/publication groups in commercial front.

## Accolades

He received several awards for literature including Rabindra Puraskar (for *Aporupa Ajanta* in 1969), Bankim Puraskar (for *Rupmanjari* in 2000), and Narasingha Dutta Award. Many of his books were filmed and he won the Best Film Story Writer Award (for *Satyakaam*) by Bengal Film Journalists.

## List of works

### Adaptations in movies

- 1. **Satyakam**, his novel, was adapted into Hindi film, *Satyakam* (1969), directed by Hrishikesh Mukherjee, starring Dharmendra, Sharmila Tagore as *Ranjana*, Rabi Ghosh and Ashok Kumar.<sup>[4]</sup>
- 2. His another novel, **Nagchampa** was turned into *Jodi Jantem*, a Bengali Film released on 1 March 1974. This film was directed by *Yatrik* and starred by Uttam Kumar as *P. K. Basu*, Ruma Guha Thakurta as *Ranu*, Soumitra Chatterjee as *Koushik Mitra*, Supriya Choudhury as *Sujata*, Basanta Choudhury, Kamal Mitra and Haradhan Banerjee. Sanyal also wrote the dialogue.
- 3. The plot of **Ashleelotar Daye** was adopted to a Chiranjit starred film with the same name (1983).
- 4. **Neelimay Neel** was turned into a Tapas Paul, Indrani Halder & Anup Kumar starred film in 1991.
- 5. **Pashando Pandit** was turned into a Soumitra Chatterjee starred film in 1993.

### Children and teenage literature

- Sherlock Hebo [শার্লক হেবো] (1971)
- Origami (1982; with Pradip Dutta)
- Disneyland [ডিসনেল্যান্ড] (1985)—A delightful account on his trip to Disneyland, California. The book contains some of his pencil sketches.
- Nak Unchu [নাক উঁচু] (1985)
- Hati Aar Hati [হাতি আর হাতি] (1989)

### Scientific articles and science fictions

- Biswasghatak [বিশ্বাসঘাতক] (1974)—This is a book about the story of the Manhattan Project in the US during the 1930s and has a good insight on the type of collective intellect that worked together to make the project a success. This book also displays the win of economics and politics over "common sense" and the disastrous aftermath of such an action.
- He Hansabalaka [হে হংসবলাকা] (1974)
- Obak Prithibee [অবাক পৃথিবী] (1976)
- Nakshatraloker Debotatma [নক্ষত্রলোকের দেবতাত্মা] (1976)
- Aji Hote Shatobarsho Pore [আজি হতে শতবর্ষ পরে] (1985)

## Painting, sculpture, architecture

- Ajanta Aparupa [অজন্তা অপরূপা] (1968)
- La-jawab Dehli Aparupa Agra [লা-জবাব দেহলি অপরূপা আগ্রা] (1982)
- Immortal Ajanta (1984)
- Erotics in Indian Temples (1984)
- Bharatiyo Bhaskarje Mithun [ভারতীয় ভাস্কর্যে মিথুন] (1980)
- Prabanchak [প্রবঞ্চক] (1987)—This contains two articles, one on the original story of stealing the Mona Lisa & the other one is on the greatest forgery in the history of paintings.

## Travel

- DandokShabori [দণ্ডকশবরী] (1962)
- Pother Mohaprosthan [পথের মহাপ্রস্থান] (1965)
- Japan Theke Fire [জাপান থেকে ফিরে] (1971)—This is an account of a trip to Japan during Exposition, 1970.

## Nostalgic

- Shat Ekshotti [ষাট একষট্টি] (1984)
- Abar Se Esechhe Firiya [আবার সে এসেছে ফিরিয়া] (1989)

## Psychological

- Monami [মনামী] (1960)
- Antarleena [অন্তরীনা] (1966)
- Tajer Swapno [তাজের স্বপ্ন] (1969)

## Detective

All books of the *Kanta* series are of **Prasanna Kumar Basu** (famously known as *P. K. Basu*), Bar at Law.

- 1.**Nagchampa** [নাগচম্পা] (Published: 1968)

This novel is the first P. K. Basu story by Sanyal, though he called it as a "trial ball". It was later adopted in a Bengali movie, *Jodi Jantem* in 1974. Here, Basu is shown to be an old, unmarried man; who solves the death mystery of a businessman. *Sujata*, who is an essential character of the following stories, was accused of murder. *Koushik*, in a disguise of a driver, also helps her. *Koushik* is a typical example of bulk of the engineers who fails to manage any satisfiable job.

- 2.**Sonar Kanta** [সোনার কাঁটা] (Written:1974 Published:October 1974; Inspiration: *Mousetrap* by Agatha Christie; Dedication: *Late Byomkesh Bakshi*)

After *Jodi Jantem*, he changed the character *Basu* to be an aged lawyer, whose wife *Ranu* is made invalid & *Suborna* alias *Mithu*, their only daughter is died in an accident. This novel marks the proper starting of the series. This is based on a murder of *Ramen Guha*, a policeman and some other incidents at *The Repose*, a hotel at Ghum, Darjeeling, run by the Mitra couple, *Sujata* & *Koushik Mitra*.

- 3.**Machher Kanta** [মাছের কাঁটা] (Written:1974, Published:March 1975; Dedication: Samarjit

Gupta)

Mitra couple returns Kolkata, after selling the hotel and starts a private detective agency, named **Sukoushali** [সুকৌশলী] at Basu's residence at New Alipore. This story revolves about *Supriya Dashgupta* [সুপ্রিয় দাশগুপ্ত], a manager of a Bombay based farm. At the end of the story, the caught person is proved to be different than the original culprit.

- **4.Pother Kanta** [পথের কাঁটা] (Written:1975, Published:January 1976; Dedication: Mukul Chakraborty)

Old *Jagadananda Sen* lives with granddaughter *Nilima Sen*, nephew *Jogananda* and Jogananda's relative *Shyamal. Mahendra*, his ex-employee, whom he revoked, suddenly comes back and starts blackmailing Jagadananda. He, then seeks help from Basu. Meanwhile, police arrests Jagadananda in charge of killing his own nephew Jogananda. *Joydeep*, Nilima's fiance shadows another ex-employee of Jagadananda, *Yu Siang*, a Burmese, who is also supposed to come India to blackmail the old man. Finally, Basu succeeds to make him free catching the culprit.

- **5.Ghorir Kanta** [ঘড়ির কাঁটা] (Written:1976, Published:January 1977; Dedication: Suresh Prasad Lahiri Chaudhuri)

*Rabi Bosu*, a police inspector, who is prevalent in some later stories, is introduced. This story is about a ticket of lottery and a murder. Basu makes *Prakash Sengupta*, a doctor free from all charges of killing his friend, *Kamalesh Mitter*.

- **6.Kuler Kanta** [কুলের কাঁটা] (Written:1977, Published:May 1978; Dedication: Kamal Hossain)

*Minati Roychaudhury*, alias *Minti*, a lost granddaughter of *GokulChandra Roychaudhury* is found back. This story has a very little to do with Basu.

- **7.Uler Kanta** [উলের কাঁটা] (Written: 1978, Published:May 1980; Inspiration: *The Case of the Perjured Parrot* by Erle Stanley Gardner; Dedication: Sheela & Gourdas BosuMallik)

*Mahadeo Prasad Khanna*, an ex-M. P. was murdered in a lonely cottage in Kashmir. A parrot is taught in such a way that *Rama Khanna*, a Bengali lady, supposed to be married by Khanna is kept in the lock-up. Basu finally solves the issue by tracing some clues at the cottage, that includes a pair of wool knitting sticks (in Bengali, which are called *Uler Kanta*).

- **8.Aw-Aaw-Kaw Khuner Kanta** [অ-আ-ক-খুনের কাঁটা] (Written: 1986, Published: Kolkata Book Fair, 1987; Inspiration: *A. B. C. Murders* by Agatha Christie; Dedication: Prafulla Roy)

*ChandraaChoor Chatterjee* [চন্দ্রচূড় চ্যাটার্জী] of Chandannagar was murdered by his brother in law *Bikash Mukherjee*. Bikash makes an excellent plan to put the blame on a retired Mathematics teacher *ShibajeeProtap Chakraborty*. Chakraborty has a bit psychological problems and has past records of attempt of murder unconsciously. Bikash takes full advantage of this, by sending some letters to Basu. These letters apparently seem to be a childish or lunatic job, as it contain quotations & pictures from Sukumar Ray's writings for children and some hotchpotch of Sanskrit & English, but the thing turns serious when murders are made in Asansol and Burdwan (these two names are mentioned in the letters).

- **9.Sarmeyo Genduker Kanta** [সারমেয় গেণ্ডুকের কাঁটা] (Written: April 1988, Published: Kolkata Book Fair, 1989; Inspiration: *Dumb Witness* by Agatha Christie; Dedication: Late ProbodhChandra Basu)

*Miss Pamela Johnson* of *Merinagar*, a hypothetical township near Kanchrapara, West Bengal dies at age 72. She donates all her belongings to her servants and non-profitable organisations, totally unexpectedly, as everyone anticipates that the old lady would give it to her relatives: *Suresh Haldar*, *Smrituku Haldar* alias *Tuku & Hena Thakur*. This novel is unique in a way as it is written in a first person speech of Koushik Mitra.

- **10.Koutuholi Koner Kanta** [কৌতুহলী কনের কাঁটা] (Published: 1993 from Ujjwal Sahitya Mandir; Dedication: Aloka & Ananta Prasad Tribedi) (ISBN 8173340072)

A distressed lady, *Chhanda*, is presently married to *Tridib Narayan Rao*, son of *Tribikram Narayan Rao* who is an aristocrat Rajput and also a business tycoon. She is accused of a murder of her previous husband *Kamalendu Biswas* alias *Kamalskha Kar* alias *Kamal Chandra Ghosh*, who also had previous marriages. Basu saves the poor lady.

- **Abhi Purbak Nee Dhatu Aw-er Kanta** [অভি পূর্বক নী ধাতু অ-য়ের কাঁটা] (Inspiration: *The Case of the Restless Redhead* by Erle Stanley Gardner).
- **Jadu Eto Boro Ronger Kanta** [যাদু এতো বড় রঙ্গের কাঁটা]
- **Ristedarer Kanta** [রিস্তেদারের কাঁটা] (Published: 1992; Inspiration: *The Case of the Beautiful Beggar* by Erle Stanley Gardner).
- **Dress Rehearsaler Kanta** [ড্রেস রিহাসালের কাঁটা] (Inspiration: *Three Act Tragedy* by Agatha Christie).
- **NyayNishtha Nyasnasheer Kanta** [ন্যায়নিষ্ঠ ন্যাসনাশীর কাঁটা] (Published: 1994).
- **Sokol Kanta Dhyonyo Kore** [সকল কাঁটা ধন্য করে]
- **Kantay Kantay** (in 6 volumes) [কাঁটায় কাঁটায়] -A collection of all *Kanta* books, published by Dey's Publishing.
  - **Kantay Kantay 1** (Published: 1990): Sonar Kanta, Machher Kanta, Pother Kanta, Ghorir Kanta, Kuler Kanta.
  - **Kantay Kantay 2** (Published: 1990): Uler Kanta, Aw-Aaw-Kaw Khuner Kanta, Sarmeyo Genduker Kanta.

## Research related

- **Netaji Rahasyo Sandhane** [নেতাজি রহস্য সন্ধানে] (1970)
- **Chin-Bharat Long March** [চিন-ভারত লং মার্চ] (1977)
- **Poyomukhm** [পয়োমুখম] (1987)

## Refugee problems

- **Bolmeek** [বল্মীক] (1955)
- **Bakultala P.L. Camp** [বকুলতলা পি. এল. ক্যাম্প] (1955)
- **AronyoDondok** [অরণ্যদণ্ডক] (1961)

## Historical

- **Mohakaler Mondir** [মহাকালের মন্দির] (1964)
- **Hanseshwaree** [হংসেশ্বরী] (1977)
- **AnandaSwarupini** [আনন্দস্বরূপিণী] (1978)
- **Ladley Begum** [লাডলী বেগম] (1986)
- **RupManjari** [রূপমঞ্জরী]

## Biographical

- Ami Netajike Dekhechhi [আমি নেতাজিকে দেখেছি] (1970)
- Ami Rasbeharike Dekhechhi [আমি রাসবিহারীকে দেখেছি] (1973)
- Lindeberg [লিন্ডবার্গ] (1978)

## Devdasi related

- Sutonuka Ekti Devdasir Nam [সুতনুকা একটি দেবদাসীর নাম] (1983)
- Sutonuka Kono Devdasir Nam Noy [সুতনুকা কোন দেবদাসীর নাম নয়] (1984)

## Dramas

- Muskil Aasan [মুস্কিল আসান] (1954)
- Ek Dui Tin [এক দুই তিন] —An adoption in Bengali of the play by George Orwell-Animal Farm.

## Essay collections

- Swargiyo Naraker Dwar Ebong... [স্বর্গীয় নরকের দ্বার এবং...] (1992)
- Leonardor Noteboi Ebong... [লেঅনাদোর নোটবই এবং...] (1992)

## Na Manush (Not Man) related

- Gajomukta [গজমুক্তা] (1973)
- Timi Timingil [তিমি তিমিঙ্গিল] (1979)
- Raskel [রাস্কেল] (1984)
- Na-Manushi Bishwokosh (Ek) [না-মানুষী বিশ্বকোষ এক] (1988)
- Na-Manushi Bishwokosh (Dui) [না-মানুষী বিশ্বকোষ দুই] (1990)
- Na-Manusher Kahini [না-মানুষের কাহিনী] (1988)

## Social novels

- Bryatya [ব্রাত্য] (1959)
- Alokanda [অলকানন্দা] (1963)
- Neelimay Neel [নীলিমায় নীল] (1964)
- Satyakam [সত্যকাম] (1965)
- Pashanda Pandit [পাষণ্ড পণ্ডিত] (1970)
- Asleelotar Daye [অশ্লীলতার দায়ে] (1975; Inspiration: *Seven Minutes* by Irving Wallace).
- Lal Trikon [লাল ত্রিকোণ] (1975)
- Parabola Sir [প্যারাবোলা স্যার] (1977)
- Aabar Jodi Ichcha Karo [আবার যদি ইচ্ছা কর]
- Milanantak [মিলনান্তক] (1985)
- Chonbal [ছোঁবল] (1989)
- Chhoytaner Chaoyal [ছয়তানের ছাওয়াল] (1989)
- Emonta To Hoyei Thake [এমনটা তো হয়েই থাকে] (1992)
- Amrapali [আম্রপালি] (1992)
- Maan Mane Kachu [মান মানে কচু] (1992)

## References

1. "Biography of Narayan Sanyal". *Shibpur International*. shibpurinternational.com. Retrieved 24 August 2011.
2. "Author profile of Narayan Sanyal". *Goodreads*. goodreads.com. Retrieved 24 August 2011.
3. From the introduction of *Kantay Kantay 1* by Sanyal himself.
4. Gulzar; Govind Nihalani; Saibal Chatterjee (2003). *Encyclopaedia of Hindi cinema*. Popular Prakashan. p. 337. ISBN 81-7991-066-0.

## External links

- Narayan Sanyal (http://www.imdb.com/name/nm1238805/) at the Internet Movie Database
- An obituary (http://www.becollege.org/news/news\_item.asp?NewsID=135)
- Another obituary (http://www.hindu.com/2005/02/08/stories/2005020808320900.htm)
- WorldCat Booklist (http://worldcat.org/search?q=au%3ANarayan+Sanyal&fq=dt%3Abks&qt=facet\_dt%3A)



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Categories: Bengali novelists | Bengali-language writers | Bengali writers | Bengali detective writers | Recipients of the Rabindra Puraskar | 1924 births | 2005 deaths | University of Calcutta alumni

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